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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PNAT](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: SUNNI PARTIES SQUABBLE OVER POSITIONS

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert Ford for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Hassan al-Bazzaz, an advisor to Tawaffuq leader Adnan al-Dulaymi, told Poloff on April 1 that government formation talks are suffering from internal squabbling among the three Tawaffuq leaders. Bazzaz said that Tareq al-Hashimi is trying to exclude Adnan al-Dulaymi from a senior position in the next government. Dulaymi should be offered a position commensurate with his social and political standing and the US should ensure this, said Bazzaz. Taking into consideration his age and physical frailty, the position of Deputy President would be most appropriate, he added. Bazzaz also bemoaned the Tawaffuq leadership's inflexibility negotiating security issues. The Sunni Arabs should seek assurances that top security officials would not serve sectarian agendas rather than demanding Sunni Arab control over the key positions. Without such concessions, said Bazzaz, the talks could be stalled for some time.

¶2. (C) Salih Mutlak, leader of the Sunni Arab Hewan (Dialog) Coalition also told Poloff on April 1 that Tawaffuq demands to control the security positions are an impediment to progress in government talks. It is more important to settle on a non-sectarian candidate for Prime Minister than to focus on the security portfolio, he stated. With a non-sectarian Prime Minister, all the security concerns could quickly be resolved. Instead of focusing on the big picture, the Tawaffuq wants to tie the hands of the next Prime Minister, Mutlak alleged.

¶3. (C) Saad Janabi, head of the Iraqi Republican Group and part of Allawi's Iraqiyya list told Poloff on March 31 that he too is very concerned that intra-party squabbling over positions is affecting the government formation talks. It is not just the Shia Coalition that is falling apart over nominations, Janabi observed. The top Tawaffuq leaders all expect senior positions and the second tier want ministries as well, he commented. A similar problem exists within the Iraqiyya list.

¶4. (C) Comment: As the government formation talks begin to focus on proposing specific candidates for specific jobs, we see how fragile the political coalitions really are. We have been asking since late December for Tawaffuq, Hewan and Iraqiyya leaders to start thinking about good candidates for ministerial positions. The few names that they brought forward came from individuals or specific parties and not from blocs - indicating that internal agreement on these key issues has not yet been reached. Recognizing that

consensus within the blocs may be difficult, some of our political interlocutors are demanding that the USG select the new Iraqi cabinet ministers, and allowing them to vet the choices. Lest we interpret the pleas for intervention reported above as appeals from true Iraq patriots, we note that Hassan Bazzaz wants to be the next Foreign Minister, Saad Janabi was concerned that his name may not be on the list of possible candidates for Minister of Defense and Salih Mutlak believes that only he can meet the test of a non-sectarian Prime Minister. End Comment.

KHALILZAD